

K. Burnett (9.)

REMARKS

On Two Late

698. 2
15
SERMONS,

PREACH'D in the

Cathedral-Church

OF

SALISBURY.

In a LETTER to a FRIEND.

To which is added, A

POSTSCRIPT,

Wherein the Charge of Uncharitableness
against the Church for condemning Lay-
Baptism as invalid, is more particularly
consider'd and confuted.

L O N D O N :

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REMARKS

On Two Laws

SEPARATION

Between the

Church and the World

OF

THE

POSTSCRIPT

TO THE

POSTSCRIPT

Within the Church of England
against the Church of England
and the Church of England
and the Church of England

AND

THE

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Argument prove any thing it proves too much; it will authorize Resistance, not only
 against the Law, but against the Authority of the Law, to which it is
 owing. This Argument will prove farther, that the
 Prince is not bound and inviolable, but may on occasion be
 S I R,

WHO has a better Right to the produce of my leisure Hours than the
 Person, by whose Favour I enjoy them, and who is allow'd a good
 Judge of the Controversy I have presum'd to dip into.

For 'tis not necessary that a Man in order to Think and Reason just-
 ly, should make his Tour through the Sciences; I am entirely of *Cicero's* Opinion,
 that a natural Force of Mind is far superior to all the Advantages of human Learn-
 ing without it.

1. Not to trouble you with the farther Ceremony of an Introduction, accept, *Sir*,
 with your usual Candor, the Remarks I am going to make and address to you on the
 Two late Sermons, said to be publish'd by the Bishop of *Salisbury*; but with all due
 regard to a Character which I desire to preserve a higher Veneration for, than has
 been shewn by some Persons who have had the Honour to bear it.

2. I begin with the first of these Sermons (if those be really his Sermons that go
 under his Name) on the Fifth of *November*. The Design of it is to establish a Do-
 ctrine he has so much at Heart, that 'tis not known how far Moderation may be
 provoked, if the World cannot be brought to receive it.

You will conclude without more ado, that I mean the Doctrine of Resistance, in
 opposition to which a just Zeal for the Church, for Her Majesty, for the Civil Con-
 stitution, for the Protestant Succession and the Honour of the Revolution, has en-
 gag'd me in this Undertaking.

The Protestant Succession and the Honour of the Revolution! Why these are the
 very grounds from which all the Artillery against Her Majesty's Hereditary Title and
 the Doctrine of the Church is plaid; yet if you please to have a little Patience, I
 hope it will appear in the Sequel, that the Enemies great Ordinance may not only be
 render'd unserviceable to them, but turn'd upon them.

3. The Foundation of all the reasoning upon this Point of Resistance is laid in the
 following Maxim, That the Legislature is in the King with the Two Houses of Par-
 liament, but the Execution of the Law is singly in the Crown. The *Essence* of our
 Constitution, we are told, lies in this.

4. Now to my dull Apprehension this Argument at first View proves the direct con-
 trary of what the Author would infer from it: for if the Execution of the Law be sin-
 gly in the Crown, by what Law or Authority ('tis a Question I know all People do
 not love to hear of) can the Subjects levy War against the Prince?

By the Laws of the Constitution 'tis certain they cannot, for the Executive Power
 of the Law is singly in the Prince: So that whatever Legal Rights the People may
 have in other respects, 'tis plain from the Sermon it self, in case those Rights be in-
 vaded, they can have no Legal Right of redressing themselves; for to have a Legal
 Right to do any thing, supposes what is so done to be executed according to Law;
 but the Execution of the Law being singly in the Crown, the Subject can have no such
 Right. This seems as demonstrable as that twice Two make Four.

There are but two other Considerations out of which this Right of Resistance can
 be suppos'd to arise; either it must be deriv'd from the Law of Nations, or from the
 Law of Nature.

5. Some People may tell us that we have the Examples of many Ages and Nations,
 and particularly several Revolutions in our own, to justify the Resistance of Princes
 when they break in upon the Laws and Liberties of the People. In such Cases we
 have *Precedents* for Coercing, for Deposing, for Murdering of Princes. But if this

Argument prove any thing-it proves too much; it will authorise Resistance, not only against Princes who endeavour an intire Subversion of the Laws, to which Case the Author would be thought to limit the *Privilege* of Resistance, but against Princes who rule tolerably well; nay against the best and wisest of Princes; for there may be Errors even in the Government of such. This Argument will prove farther, that the Person of the Prince is not sacred and inviolable, but may on occasion be cut in pieces.

The Authority therefore of Example cannot be urged in this Case; all that can be concluded from it is, that Nature is sometimes apt to Rebel against Principle; a Conclusion, I'm persuaded, will not be disputed.

The Law of Nations and common Custom, had the Doctrine of Resistance any real Foundation in it, are a good Rule to us, where we are under no antecedent Obligation, but are left at Liberty to act, or not to act, upon prudential Motives; in such Cases we may follow the general Practice of the World, without being oblig'd to give any other Reason for it. But that this is not our Case, will appear more particularly, when I come to consider how far the Resistance of a Tyrant may be justified by the Law of Nature.

6. Only give me leave, by the way, to observe to you an useful Improvement that may be made of this Plea for Rebellion, from Example and Precedent.

The Republicans, or what you please to call them, pretend that upon the Principle of absolute Non-Resistance, we should in a few Years have no Haymaking, nor Harvest; that the whole Race of Mankind in a Succession of two or three Tyrants, in their several Dominions, might be swept away by a Deluge of Blood, as it was of old, excepting some few Persons that were left by a Deluge of Water.

Now in order to suppose this, we must first destroy what indeed Men of Intrigue are commonly the least dispos'd to take into their loose Measures, the Belief of a Providence: And then 'tis granted, whether Subjects ought in any Case to resist the Sovereign, will be a Question of no Consequence; for whatever they ought to do, we may conclude, setting aside the belief of a Providence, what in a Case where they find themselves pinch'd, they certainly will do.

But what I would chiefly observe is, That this Pretence of the general Devastation which the Doctrine of Non-Resistance is bringing upon the Earth, is directly overthrown by the Precedents we are so often told of, and which are alledg'd to prove, that Men have in all Ages and Nations found Means one way or other, to shake off the Yoke of Tyranny. Now what has been may be, notwithstanding any receiv'd Principle to the contrary; for Men, as was observ'd before, do not always act by Principle.

Even in this Sermon, p. 5. that we are reckon'd to have increas'd four Times more in Number than we were at the Time of the Reformation; and yet there is scarce a Matter of Fact in the World more evident, than that the Doctrine of Non-Resistance has been the avow'd Doctrine both of the Church and State since the Reformation. How then is this such a dead-doing depopulating Doctrine?

'Tis true, there have been some Practices in former Reigns contrary to this Doctrine, and 'tis to be fear'd may be again, if a stop be not put to the open Insults that are made on the Rights of the Crown: But 'tis not so clear that those Practices were engag'd in by every Body upon Principle, there is reason to believe they were not: And certainly those who make an honorary and ingenuous acknowledgment, that they could make a false Step, deserve much greater Applause than they, who are resolv'd to maintain an Error at any rate.

So that whilst a divine Providence governs the World; whilst God can make use of the Wickedness of Men to effect the Designs of his Providence, without being the Author of their Sins, and whilst there are wicked Men in the World, that do not always act upon Principle; Non-Resistance does not seem to threaten so general an extirpation of Mankind as some would have it thought.

7. I am to consider in the next place, whether the Law of Nature may be any way servicable to this Theory of Resistance; in which it is an avow'd Principle, that
Subjects

Subjects are bound by the Laws of the Constitution. 'Tis upon this foot we are told, on another Occasion, that the Primitive Christians did not resist, *because they had no Laws in their favour, but many against them*; that is, many human or positive Laws against them. For as to the Law of Nature, it declar'd as much for them as for other People. Does it not follow undeniable from hence, that in the Opinion of the B—— of S—— the Measures of Civil Subjection are not to be determin'd by our Natural, but by our Legal Rights. So that where the Laws of the State guard the Prince from Resistance, the Plea of resisting him from the Law of Nature is out of Doors, except perhaps you will say, that Legal Rights belong only to the People.

8. Now this is the Case of the good People of *Great-Britain*, they have no Law for resisting the Prince, should he endeavour to subvert their Liberties; and 'tis better, all things consider'd, that they have not: Were there any such Law we should have been sure either here or elsewhere to have heard of it: but there is no such Law, nor any thing like it, nor any provisionary Clause in the Laws to this purpose. But there are many Laws which make it treasonable in the Subject, let the Pretence be what it will, to resist, or even to teach the Doctrine of Resistance; let them who teach it (if I may speak in the Language of this Sermon) *be who they will*.

9. So that in Truth the main Question seems to lie here; not, whether the Subjects of *Great-Britain* have in Fact disclaim'd all Right of Resisting the Prince, in any Case, or upon any Pretence whatever; not, whether we have any standing Laws which make all levying War against the Prince treasonable, and put the sole Power of the Sword into his Hands; but whether such Laws, and the Consent we have given to them, are not so many Nullities. For if the Law of Nature be superior to all human Compacts, all such Compacts are, *ipso facto*, void, when they come in competition with our natural Rights.

10. But this way of Reasoning will again prove too much: For if we cannot in certain Cases, depart from our natural Rights, there is an end of all Law and Government at once. 'Tis plain from the Confession of those who would be thought the great Advocates for the Natural Rights of Mankind, that we may in certain Cases surrender them into the Hands of the Magistrate, and in one Case particularly, wherein above all others, it concerns us to preserve them; and that is, when we put our selves upon Tryal for Life and Death; for if there be any Law of Nature superior to the rest, 'tis that of Self-preservation.

Yet when Men have once subjected themselves to such Laws as punish certain Crimes with Death, they ought when they are found Guilty of those Crimes, to suffer Death without Resistance, which yet, as far as they can resist, they ought not, if all human Constitutions must yield to the Original Law of Nature.

11. I speak this upon supposition, that the People could transfer the Power of Life and Death into the Hands of the Magistrate, and that a Power which they have not themselves might be said to be transfer'd: But as this implies a direct repugnancy in the Nature of the Thing, 'tis an undeniable Argument, and which no tolerable Answer has or can be given to, that the Magistrate derives his Authority immediately from God, in whose Hands alone are the Issues of Life.

12. But let it be granted for once, that the Law of Nature renders all such human Compacts as are prejudicial to our Natural Rights, null and void. Pray what would be the Consequence of this wild Supposition? In a State of Nature every Man has a common Right to the Ground he treads on, and the Fruits of the Earth, and indeed to every thing necessary or convenient for him, that he can first lay his Hands on. Upon this Hypothesis 'twould be convenient to prevent any Damage your Shop Doors or Windows may sustain, to leave them open all Night; and that my Lord Mayor, when he goes to Dinner, should keep a good Guard before his House. Why should he eat better than other People? Nature has put Mankind upon a level, and her Laws are sacred and inviolable!

13. Now to take a short Review of what has been said. If the execution of the

the Law be singly in the Crown; if neither the Law of the State, nor of Nations, nor of Nature, as we have shewn, can justify Resistance, by what other unknown Law or Authority can it be justify'd? Will he say, that the Canon Law, which authorises Midwives, in Cases of Necessity, to baptise, will in the same Cases authorise Subjects to resist?

14. But if it be not lawful in some Cases to resist, may it not be very expedient? I question, Sir, even that, and shall give you my Reasons why I do so; only be pleased to take this along with you, that when I argue upon these Principles, I do not desire to be answerable for the Consequences of them.

15. The Execution of the Law is singly in the Crown. Now let us suppose the worst on't, and what 'tis to be hop'd will never happen again, that a Prince hereafter should sit upon the Throne, who may be misled by ill Councils, or his own affectation of Arbitrary Power, to put several Persons under Legal Incapacities into Employments, the Consequence of this would be bad enough; for all their Proceedings we are told, would be so many Nullities. But yet if the Execution of the Law be singly in the Crown, the Consequences in case of Tyranny would, upon his Principles, be much worse: For a Tyrant as he attempts to prove by more Arguments than one, in the Sequel actually destroys the relation between the People and himself; he is no longer their Governour, nor has any Right to execute the Law. So that instead of a Magistrate here and there acting under a Legal Incapacity, the whole Course of the Law and Justice is stop'd, and not a Man in the Kingdom has a Legal Method of redressing the Wrongs done him, or recovering his Right, till the Tyrant be depos'd; but who knows how long it might be first?

At this rate, so long as the Tyrant is able to maintain himself on the Throne, every Man may lawfully do that which is right in his own Eyes; for where there is *no Law there is no Transgression*. A very noble Speculation and well agreeing with the Notions and the Inclinations of those who desire to begin a Scramble, and are stronger than their Neighbours. But the Revenues of the Church would be very ill paid upon this Scheme, and 'twould concern those who Travel between *Salisbury* and *London* to take care of themselves.

16. 'Tis better to suffer great Inconveniences from a Tyrannical Prince, and leave the Redress of them to the good Providence of God, than that a Nation should convert into a Commonwealth of *Free-booters*. A State of Nature is certainly more to be dreaded than the worst Government of the worst of Princes.

For though it might possibly happen, that the Concurrence of the People in order to Dethrone a Tyrant, might be *almost Universal*, yet 'tis probable he might have gain'd no small Party over to his Interests; and 'twill not be very easy to prove, that those who do not concur have not a Right (if they have but Strength to support it) to oppose those that do.

And upon this account 'tis to be wish'd we may never want an Heir to sit upon the Throne of *England*; if we do not, we are safe from all these Consequences I have mention'd, as flowing from this unwarrantable Hypothesis; for the very Moment the Prince dies, either in his Natural or Civil Capacity, the Heir mounts the Throne.

17. And give me leave to observe farther, this Consideration entangles the Doctrine of Resistance, as taught among us, still with more insuperable Difficulties: for admitting, that in Elective Kingdoms, which the very mentioning the Name of *Poland* gives one so frightful an Idea of; but admitting, I say, that in such Kingdoms the People have a Power to make War upon the Prince, to coerce him, and turn him out of the Government, in case of Male-administration, yet in Hereditary Kingdoms to take up Arms to this end, is properly Treason and Rebellion against the succeeding Prince, to whom the Right of Inheritance belongs: 'Tis not levying War against the Tyrant, who is here supposed to have forfeited, and there-

therefore is at the best no more than a nominal Prince; a Prince and no Prince: but 'tis in the Nature of a *Riot*, and may be punish'd as such by the succeeding Prince, whose Elevation to the Throne the Tyrant's Forfeiture made way to, and who, if we may believe him, in what I am directly proceeding to, *forfeited* the very Moment he became a Tyrant.

These, *Sir*, are some of the immediate Consequences of this modern Theory in relation to Government and the Measures of Civil Obedience; and I take it, if I have deduc'd them right, it will follow, that Resistance as preach'd and taught by the Author of these Sermons, is so far from being lawful, that it is not to be examin'd even by the common Rules of Expediency.

We must turn over to the following Page for his next Reason, p. 10.

18. "In all Relations where the Foundation is taken away, the Relation and the Obligation arising out of it are destroy'd; the Relation of Children to a Parent arises out of his conveying Being to them; but if he goes to destroy that Being, they are acquitted when they defend themselves.

19. But it does not therefore follow that the Relation of Children to Parents, and the Obligations arising out of it are destroyed. The Father is certainly a Father while the Son liveth; the Death indeed of the Son, whether the Father procure it or not, destroys the Relation, though perhaps not all the Obligations which arise out of it: For the Father, I suppose, is oblig'd so far as comports with his Quality or Condition, to see his Son decently interr'd; but his going to destroy his Son, does not, to my apprehension, actually render him no Father; if it did, no Son whose Life the Father has attempted, could after that have any Right to be maintain'd by such a Father: For why should a Man maintain a Child that is none of his own?

Nay, 'twould be no difficult matter to prove from this Argument, that it may be lawful for a Man to marry his own Daughter, if such a Man can be found as ever attempted the Life of his Daughter; for such an Attempt destroying the Relation between them, she is no more to him than another Woman. Which puts me in mind of a Saying among the *Jewish* Rabbies *, from whom probably this Argument has been borrow'd, "He that hath married a Wife too near akin to him, if he turn Proselyte to the *Jews*, and receive their Baptism, is no longer near of Kin to the Woman, and so may now lawfully live with her. But neither, as I take it, is the Relation or the Duty of the Child vacated, though the Father has sought to take away his Life. 'Tis true, the Child has a Right to defend himself from any such Violence, yet he ought to keep as much as possible upon the Defensive: If he get the better of his Father he may proceed so far as to tie his Hands. But will any say, that after this he ought to turn him out of Doors to starve, or to be torn in pieces by the Mob?

20. My L— of S— is not the only learned Prelate who has made use of the Right which a Son has to resist a Father that seeks his Life, to prove the Lawfulness of resisting the Prince in case of unjust Force; it seems to be the *Der-nier* resort of his Lordship of O—d, yet there is nothing, with Submission, in it: my Reason is this; though in my political Capacity I may, and have tied up my Hands from resisting the Sovereign, by putting the sole Power of the Sword into his Hands, out of a due regard to the publick Good, which is superior to all other regards, yet in my *private* Capacity I am under no such Restraint; neither are there the same weighty and important Reasons why I should. There cannot then be the same Reason for arguing from one Case to the other.

21. That which renders this way of Reasoning on this Point so intricate and perplex'd, is not distinguishing between actually destroying a Relation and going about to destroy it. Tho' indeed had not these Terms been confounded, but we had been plainly

* *Ham. on the New Testament*, p. 14.

told, that in case the Father actually destroys that Being he gave his Children, they are acquitted if they defend themselves; this would have sounded a little harsh.

22. But to proceed to what follows. " The Rights of our Princes arising out of our Legislature, the setting that aside destroys the Foundation even of the Prince's Authority, and so releases the Subject.

23. Taking this Principle for granted, that the Rights of our Princes arise out of the Legislature, there is an unlucky Consequence or two that follow from it, which I cannot expect to be thank'd for observing.

The Essence of our Constitution lies in this, as we have been already told, that the Legislature is in the King, with the two Houses of Parliament. Now if the Rights of our Princes arise out of our Legislature, and the Essence of our Constitution lie in this, That the Legislature is in the King with the two Houses of Parliament, 'tis as clear as Demonstration that no Prince can have any Legal Right to the Government, but what is confirmed by the King and the two Houses of Parliament: For if you destroy any thing in an Essential part of it, you destroy it *wholly*, as I shall have occasion to shew more particularly upon the Head of Lay-Baptism.

What now will become of our renown'd Henry's of the House of Lancaster? I am afraid according to this Doctrine, their Legal Right to the Crown or the Government, will not easily be made out! And if they had no Legal Right to govern, there could be no Execution of the Law during their Government. So that all the Judges, and Sheriffs, and Magistrates during those Reigns, were no better than so many Men of Straw, and all their Proceedings so many Nullities. Could those Princes have any Right to the Government from the Legislature, as thus understood and defin'd? what Right had they then?

24. But not to pursue this Point any farther, I shall only observe, that if the Rights of our Princes arise out of our Legislature, if the Legislature be in the King and the two Houses of Parliament, and this be the thing wherein the Essence of our Constitution lies, then there is an end of our Constitution, in this way of Reasoning, to those who set up a Parliamentary in opposition to an Hereditary Right. This is something more than going to the Root of our Constitution, 'tis subverting it to all Intents and Purposes; 'tis destroying the very Essence of it, and a total Annihilation of it. These are some of the Consequences which naturally flow from the Idea which is here given us of our Constitution, let us now see what was design'd to be inferr'd,

25. " The Rights of our Princes arising out of our Legislature, the setting that aside destroys the Foundation even of the Prince's Authority, and so releases the Subject.

26. That I may discover the force of this Argument, I shall put a Case with all possible Advantage, and upon the Grounds laid down in the Words immediately before.

The Son receives his Being from the Father, does it therefore follow, that if the Father die the Son cannot survive him; or that even if the Son should so far forget all the ties of Nature and Humanity, as to put a Period to his Father's Life, he must at the same time put a Period to his own. Again, the Right a Child has to his Father's Estate is founded in the Relation he has to his Father; when his Father dies the Relation as we are told is destroyed; he has therefore no Right to his Father's Estate. But will the Learned in the Law give this under their Hands? Nay, suppose the Son be the Instrument of his Father's Death, yet even his Parricide does not vacate his Right, he shall enjoy his Paternal Estate while he lives, and I conceive, if he die for his Offence, his Heirs after him in his Right.

The Foundation of Marriage is a Contract between the Parties, of mutual Love and Fidelity, but in case this Contract be not observ'd as it ought, is the Marriage, *ipso Facto*, null, or are the Parties thereupon released? I would desire no better Business than to be able to prove this. The Prince is married to the State, but

but proves unfaithful to his Spouse, so unfaithful that he refuses her all Conjugal Rights, and even perhaps conspires her Destruction; here the original Contract we are so often told of, and which we will suppose, was the Foundation of the Marriage, is broke, but still the State is not *sui juris*: Before she be released she ought however to sue out a Bill of Divorce; but in what Court shall she sue?

27. But if I may be so bold to approach a little nearer, the Rights of the Subject arise out of the Legislature as well as the Rights of the Prince. Now suppose the Subject should assume the whole Right of the Legislature, exclusive of the Prince, by the same Reason there is an end of all the Rights of the Subject; will this be admitted a Consequence which there is no avoiding?

28. After all, it does not follow that the Prince by endeavouring to destroy all future Rights of the Legislature, destroys the Rights of that Original Legislative Authority, which set the Crown on his Head, except it were then stipulated, that in Case of Male-Administration he should incur the Forfeiture of his Crown, that Original Grant or Authority by which he holds it, is still valid and stands good: but where is there any such Stipulation or Condition? Let it be produc'd and there is an end of this Controversy.

29. Now follows a New Medium for the proof of this Doctrine, "If it be lawful to defend our selves against an Usurper, which none deny (for the Higher Powers which may not be resisted, are only the Legal not the usurping Powers) then a Prince who assumes a Power he has not over the Legislature, by that very Pretension he makes himself an Usurper."

30. That an Usurper in a proper Sense may be resisted no body will deny; yet that in case of Conquest or a thorough Settlement, he may not be resisted is what we have heard a great many affirm. But there is scarce any body will affirm, that an Usurper ought to be resisted in the large, and improper, and new Notion of an Usurper, upon which this Argument is form'd; 'tis a sign reasoning is at a low Ebb when it turns upon Equivoking and a Gingle of Words.

31. An Usurper in the Sense of this Author, is one who invades any Right of the Legislature, or as it will appear from what follows, any other Right of the Subject; 'tis no matter whether the Right he invades be of greater or less importance, he is still an Usurper and may be resisted. At this rate there have not been many Princes in the World but what were Usurpers. We have heard our Royal Martyr condemn'd for some Errors of this kind in his Government; he was therefore an Usurper, and 'twas lawful to resist him. Would you have a better Argument to justify the Rebellion against him? 'Tis certain, in the Opinion of a learned Prelate, that shall be nameless, he assum'd a Power even over the Legislature. This was Usurpation in the highest Sense; will you call those Rebels that took up Arms to oppose it?

32. He makes no farther use of the Words of *St. Paul* than to tell us, that he will not enter into an examination of them. The reason whereof I will own is more evident of the two, than that he had our Royal Martyr in his Thoughts in the foregoing Paragraph. He only adds as a certain Truth, that the Higher Powers which are ordain'd of God, are only the lawful Powers, not to be apply'd to Usurpers: But 'tis certain beyond dispute, that the Powers *St. Paul* preach'd Subjection to, whether he wrote under the Reigns of *Nero* or *Claudius*, were Usurpers in his strange and unusual Sense. And 'tis as certain every Soul was to be subject to them. Will he say that the Government of either of these Princes was so regular that there was no Invasion of the Rights of the Subject in it; they were then both of them Usurpers, and might have been resisted if this Doctrine be true: but the Apostle determines otherwise.

After this transient view of *Romans* 13. he proceeds in his way of reasoning.

33. "If the Law creates the Prerogative, and the Execution of the Law is only the lawful Exercise of it, then a Prince who supercedes the Law and acts in defiance of it, becomes plainly an Usurper."

34. Here

34. Here the Usurper comes over again, his Head seems full of his new Idea of him. When uncommon Notions are advanc'd 'tis convenient the Memory should be often refresh'd. But how does the Law create the Prerogative? I always thought that the Law had rather limited the Prerogative, and that the Prince has an arbitrary and independent Authority to do what he pleases, where the Law does not circumscribe him. This Authority, if I mistake not, is what we call the Prerogative. To say therefore the Law creates the Prerogative, seems as much as to say, the narrower Compass a Gentleman brings his Park into, the wider he may range in it.

35. What is here said is next illustrated with a Comparison. "And as two Persons demanding a Debt, to the one of whom nothing at all is owing, and to another the Tenth part of the Demand is not due, they both give a Man a right to oppose them all he can, the one intirely and the other as far as the Demand exceeds what is due. So where two usurp, the one having no Right at all, the other assuming that to which 'tis very certain he has no Right, (a very nice distinction) as both are Usurpers, so the latter seems the more Criminal, as breaking a Trust and making use of the Authority the Law gives him to the destruction of it. This matter was then so well understood that the concurrence was almost universal.

But when or what matter this long Simile turns upon we are left to Conjecture. Ordinary Rules of Writing and Connection are for ordinary and vulgar Writers.

36. But not to insist on matters foreign to our purpose, the plain English of the Passage before us is this, That a lawful Prince that acts in any Case contrary to Law, is worse than an Usurper that sets himself above all Laws. For instance, King Charles the First, if it be true that in any one Instance he assum'd a Power that belong'd not to him, was an Usurper in this Sense; perhaps it may be granted that *Oliver Cromwel* was so too. But then 'tis as clear as this Method of Reasoning can make any thing, that the King was the greater Usurper and the more Criminal of the two. *Cromwel* only assum'd what he had no right at all to; the King is suppos'd to have only assum'd that to which 'tis very certain he had no right. *Cromwel* upon this Supposition did no more than take a Trust upon him, which the King was unfaithful to. And if it be so great a Crime in a Subject to put himself at the head of the Government, contrary to all Law, and pretence of Right to all the ties of Conscience, Fidelity and Honour, what shall we think of an *usurping* Prince, that touches the Liberty or Property of the Subject with one of his Fingers?

37. 'Tis farther observable from this Passage, if it conclude any thing, that if the Prince in any Case invade the Right of the Subject, the Subject has a right to oppose him all he can. Here is no exception as to Cases of the last Extremity or an intire Subversion of our Laws and Liberties: 'Tis necessary these things should be talk'd of for a Blind, and to take off a popular Odium. But Men will on one occasion or other discover their true meaning, and what they would be at, especially when they come to be pinch'd with cross Questions, or enter into the Detail of the matter. If there be any weight in this Argument for Resistance from the foresaid Notion of an Usurper in any Case of unjust Force whatever, I dare, Sir, undertake to prove the lawfulness of Resistance in all such Cases.

38. One word, if you please, with the famous Mr. *Hoadley* on this occasion; he too, though he proceed upon a very different Scheme, would be thought to make Exceptions to this Doctrine of Resistance, and to confine it to Cases of Extremity: But 'tis plain he ought first to quit his Principles: For if the Prince have no longer a Right to his Commission than he is the Minister of God to the People for Good, then he incurs the Forfeiture of it, in every act of Male-administration he is guilty of.

'Tis pretended indeed, but 'tis a mere pretence, this Forfeiture should not be challeng'd but only in extraordinary Cases. The Government is not to be disturb'd on every occasion. But the Prince owes Mr. *Hoadley* no thanks for this Concession; for if he be not call'd to Account or Depriv'd, 'tis not out of an Opinion of any Right

he has to the Government or the Character of God's Minister, for that he has forfeited by not keeping to his Commission; but because 'tis not for the good of the Community that such frequent Changes should happen in the Government, as would necessarily follow upon this Author's Principles, were they constantly pursued.

For 'tis plain this Argument Mr. *Hoadley* flourishes so much with, like most or all of those I have hitherto mention'd, proves too much: It will follow without any long deduction from it, that upon any illegal Act the Prince is charg'd with contrary to the Nature and End of his Trust, his Crown is forfeited: The People may if they see Cause, for their own Ease, suffer him to enjoy it a while longer; but they may too, if the publick Good require, in order to *establish a better state of things*, demand the forfeiture.

39. If it should happen then that a weak, tho' otherways a good Prince, should have made a false Step or two to the prejudice of the State, and at a time when the Circumstances which a Nation is under require a more active and martial Spirit, may it not be lawful, *pro hac vice*, to lay aside such a Prince in order to make way for the Elevation of another, who may better discharge his Commission and answer the Ends of Government? There is nothing done in this case, but what according to Mr. *Hoadley*, arises from a discretionary Claim of Right in the People, founded on the express forfeiture of the Prince.

Thus you see how far Mr. *Hoadley's* Principles lead the People beyond the bounds he would appear to prescribe them. But Men of Parts and of a lively Imagination do not always see the farthest before them. When an Author of this Character is once mounted on his *Pegasus*, he does not know where, or how far 'twill carry him.

40. But to return to our Sermon, having done with the Reasons for Resistance, we come in the next place to its Authorities. "Her Majesty, who reigns so gloriously openly declar'd for it, and acted in it."

41. But for, or in what, we are not told; neither is it to be learn'd from any due Connection. If the Words are design'd to mean the Revolution, 'twould be a much greater presumption in me than in a Person of higher Station, to inquire into the Reasons of Her Majesty's Conduct. Such an one may use Freedoms which would not become every body; yet this I hope may be said from a most profound Veneration for our glorious Princess, without Offence, that could I believe she approv'd the Doctrine of Resistance, as taught in this Sermon, which her gracious acceptance of so many late and loyal Addresses evidently prove she does not; her single Authority would be of far greater weight with me, and I conceive with every body else, than all the weak Reasons here produced for Resistance.

42. The next Authority is that of a Noble Prelate, but what manner of Spirit his Lordship was of I shall not presume to say, when he told his Auditory, *that this Noble Prelate superseded all Canons, and what might otherwise seem owing to the decencies of his Order*. Had the Bishop or his Auditory any authoritative Jurisdiction over this Noble Prelate, it might have been much more becoming the respect due to his Episcopal Character and high Birth, to have told him of these Indecencies, if they really were so, in a more private, I had almost said decent manner. Are these the *mild things* our Religion teaches us? or this the way to allay our Heats and to extinguish our Animosities, to make our Cathedrals, and afterwards the whole Kingdom ring of our Resentments?

'Tis the Opinion of some Persons that this great and venerable, and truly Episcopal Prelate, is not here mention'd in so respectful a manner, on the Account of any thing he did at the Revolution; but because with other Reverend Fathers of our Church, he has all along made so brave a stand against some loose Measures to the Prejudice of it. Only let me add, that this venerable Prelate is charged, after his Death, with what his most intimate Friends now living neither know nor believe concerning him.

43. But his L——p's Method of Reasoning is grown of late very extraordinary. Other Persons when they Appeal to an Authority, speak advantageously of it, and set it in the best Light they can: His L——p directs us to an Authority with no other

visible Design but to diminish and *expose* it, and to shew us, that we ought not to consider it as an Authority.

44. We now come to the Business of King *James's* Abdication.

" If that Prince's *withdrawing himself* had not come after a Course of illegal Government, which excus'd the Subjects from their Allegiance; certainly the withdrawing upon the apprehension of Danger to his Person, could no more be call'd an *Abdication* than King *Charles II's* going beyond Sea after *Worcester* Fight: That could never have voided his Right, nor made the Throne vacant, but *only* because it shew'd a determined Resolution to persist in that illegal Pretension to be above the Law, and to set it aside as oft as it stood in his way.

45. If this be the true Notion of Abdication, then for any thing I know to the contrary, King *James* abdicated the Crown long before he came to it: 'Tis thought he had the same Resolution in the former Reign, if ever he should be able to put it in execution. If there be any Impropriety in supposing this, 'twill be hard however to determine how long, or how short a time he reign'd before he abdicated. This is certain, that if his abdication consisted *only* in his Resolution to govern after an arbitrary manner, he abdicated long before the Prince's coming over; how then comes his Right to be voided, and the Throne vacated at *that* time, when the Relation between that Prince and the People was *destroyed* for at least two or three Years before? So that instead of the several Nullities here enumerated under that Reign, 'twill be hard to say, whether the Throne was not vacant from the beginning to the end of it, or whether we had for all that time one Civil or Military Officer in the Kingdom.

46. We must therefore seek for some other Notion of the *Abdication*, neither of these does upon a review of them, appear well grounded; one of them is said to imply a kind of Force on King *James*, and the other is fraught with a thousand Difficulties, not to say Inconsistencies, if these Principles be true.

Let us suppose then, that King *James* out of a just consciousness of the many false Steps he had made, and of his having alienated the Affections of a brave People from him, that had lov'd him intirely, join'd with a high Indignation at the Infidelity of some Persons about him, and a sober Reflection on the Vanity and Uncertainty of all worldly Glory, grew weary of the Cares and Burdens of a Crown which never sat easy on his Head, and so was in a disposition to *withdraw* and lead a retir'd Life, as a famous *German* Emperor had done before him. 'Tis no Argument that he was not in this disposition when he went off, that he afterwards pretended a Right to the Crown. My L— of S— is not the only Person that has chang'd his Mind.

If you say this Notion of King *James's* Abdication is not without its difficulties, 'tis granted. I do not pretend to dictate and call my Notion the *only* Notion of it; you may, if you like it not, proceed upon your own. I go on to what follows.

47. Thus I have deduc'd the Grounds upon which the Revolution was carried on and establish'd, which must be look'd on as a continued Usurpation to this Day, if these Principles are not true.

How far some Principles I have examin'd are true, I must leave you to judge; but 'tis a hard Case if we be not permitted to think of the Revolution but exactly in the way here prescribed. I do not know there is any Act of Parliament which has ty'd us up to the Method wherein he deduces the Grounds of it; or which obliges us to look upon the Revolution as a continued Usurpation to this Day, except we will admit the lawfulness of Resistance, a Point some Persons have so much at Heart, they do not care what Disgrace they bring upon the Revolution, so they could but gain it.

48. But I humbly conceive there is no Necessity, when we speak of the Revolution, to enter upon this Question concerning Resistance; the *Abdication* being admitted, all things run in a much evenner and smother Channel, and may be accounted for without any such notorious Breach in the Constitution, much less without destroying the Essence of it, which must unavoidably have follow'd upon the foremention'd Principles, and if I mistake not, beyond the possibility of Contradiction.

49. The Prince of *Orange* had a Right by the Law of Nations, upon those strong and violent suspicions that were given him, supposing them as strong and violent as they were said to be, to come over with an arm'd Force, to see that nothing were done in prejudice of the Right of his Princess, and by a near Consequence of his own.

Upon his coming over King *James* abdicated. By the same Right he abdicated wholly, the Queen, if we may argue in this Case *a Majori*, might recede so far from her Right, (especially by the Consent of the States) as to take the Prince into a participation of the Throne.

And these great Events I call the Revolution, and do not at present deny the Methods taken in it to have been just and reasonable. But if by the Revolution we must be oblig'd to understand, that the present B— of S. was instrumental and did Wonders in it; that he cross'd the Water to and fro in order to promote it! I do not know that any such Obligation arises out of the Legislature.

50. "I am sensible there is one thing very much talk'd of late, in order to blacken the Revolution. Some Persons that pretend to have a great honour for it, are continually telling us of a young Gentleman on the other side the Shore, and giving us broad hints of the proofs of his Legitimacy, and on *what side* the disproof of them lies. These very Men, would have laugh'd at you with all your Gravity, had you pretended to believe any thing of a Prince of *Wales*, at the Revolution; the most ridiculous, the most chymical, we were then told, of Impostures, tho' the proofs relating to his Birth were at that time fresh, and more easily examin'd. But now for any Person, *be who be will*, to put us on the proof of the Pretender's *Illegitimacy*; is a strong Presumption that he is not really so much concern'd for the Honour of the Revolution as he would be thought; and that whatever Pretences he may make of Zeal for Her Majesty and the Protestant Succession, he is all the while *looking another way*; there is still ground for the learned Distinction, between *abjuring* and not *forgetting*.

51. And now, *Sir*, that I have mention'd the Protestant Succession, give me leave, tho' it may be thought a little out of the way, to consider that popular Question, How we reconcile the Notion of Hereditary Right with the Succession of the Illustrious House of *Hannover*? As formidable as this Objection is thought, there is nothing in my apprehension more easy, than to give a satisfactory Answer to it.

For in case the Succession be alienated or transfer'd by the Authority of the Prince with the two Houses of Parliament, this we say is a good and valid Alienation. A Father may for wise Reasons disinherit his eldest Son, and then the second Son has a Right, an Hereditary Right, I take it, to his Estate.

Upon the same grounds we assert the Hereditary Right of the House of *Hannover*; the Princes of the Blood before it were under a Moral, and therefore put under a Legal Incapacity to succeed to the Crown. By the same Right a Father may exclude an Idiot, a Lunatick, or Extravagant from his Estate.

Here is nothing done but by a good and sufficient Warrant, by a full Legislature, acting agreeably to the general Sense and Reason, and practice of Mankind in other Cases. The Prince concurs with the two Houses of Parliament, in settling the Succession upon that Illustrious House; though I humbly conceive, had all the intermediate Princes been excluded by Name, or under the general Notion of their being Papists, the House of *Hannover* would of Course have succeeded to the Crown by Right of Inheritance, though it had not been particularly mention'd in the Act of Settlement.

Where then is the Difficulty of reconciling the Notion of Hereditary Right with the Protestant Succession?

52. But above all, where is the Ground or Pretence for opposing Her Majesty's Hereditary Right? If She have no Hereditary Right, there is not a Demonstration in *Euclid* more clear, than that she can have no Right upon the B— of S—'s Principles, from the Legislature. A Right from the Legislature is a Right confirm'd by King, Lords and Commons. But now if there be any Heir before Her Majesty, She

can have no such Confirmation of Her Right, because one Branch of the Legislature and the principal Branch too, will be wanting to confirm it. So that in truth according to the B—, if Her Majesty have no Hereditary Right, She has no Right at all; the whole Constitution is out of Frame, or rather Annihilated: For the Essence of our Constitution lies in this, that the Legislature is in the King, with the two Houses of Parliament.

53. The next step is an Attempt to remove the Charge of Self-contradiction on this Article of Resistance; to which he answers in general, that he has always been of the same Persuasion in the Matter. But tho' I am very strongly inclin'd to believe a Person of his Order, upon his bare Asseveration, this will not satisfy every Body; and indeed he seems to think so himself, and therefore directs us to the Proofs of his Constancy and Unchangeableness as to this Point, but without telling us where we may find them; and you will observe a very particular Reason why that was not proper to be told. However we meet with them in his *Vindication of the Authority, &c.* The Reference as to that Page is right, which in matters of this Nature is no small instance of Ingenuity.

54. "It is true in case the Magistrate be furious, or desert his Right, or expose his Kingdom to the Fury of others; the Laws and Sense of all Nations agree, that the States of the Land are to be the Administrators of Power.— Here he leaves the Matter a little short; but it follows in the Book, *Till he, that is the Prince, recover himself; but the instance of Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. 4. 26. shews, that still the Kingdom should be sure to him, when he recovers.*

You will conclude from hence, that 'tis not necessary, in his Opinion, for any Person to carry a Citation farther than may seem to make for him. Something of this kind has been suggested in relation to Bishop *Bedell*, but the Charge there ran somewhat higher; for an Author may make more free with his own Writings than those of other Men. The next Citation is to the same effect.

55. "The case varies very much, when the Abuse is such that it tends to a total Subversion, which may be call'd a Phrenzy; since no Man is capable of it till he be under some Lesion of Mind; in which case the Power is to be administered by others for the Prince and his People's safety. But let us observe what follows; *But this will never prove that a Magistrate governing by Law, though there be great Errors in his Government, ought to be coerc'd.* But why may not such a Magistrate be resisted? the Reason is, that it would open a Door to perpetual Broils, to make every Man both a Judge and a Party in his own Case. Is not this the very Reason we urge against Resistance in all Cases? or can we suppose any one Case, wherein this Reason, if it be one, will not hold good; either therefore 'tis no Reason, or some Body has not been always of the same Persuasion in this Matter. How well these Passages have prov'd that he has, will appear if we consider farther,

56. That though every Man in the Kingdom may not be a proper Judge, whether the King be *besides himself*, yet his Physicians and the great Men about him may; and if he be really distracted, or in a Phrenzy, as is suppos'd, 'tis no Breach, but an Argument of their Fidelity to him, to look after him till he be in a way of Recovery. But does this argue that the Subjects have therefore a Right to make War upon him, to set up another in his stead? No, it proves, as the Professor of *Glasgow* was of Opinion, the direct contrary. His Physicians are to prescribe him a proper Diet, and if they see cause, to provide him as is usual in such Cases, a dark Room and clean Straw, or perhaps to let him run for some convenient time in the Park; and when they have brought him to himself, then with *Nebuchadnezzar*, he is to enter again upon the Administration, and the Kingdom to be sure to him. A Man must go a long way about to justify Resistance, or the consistency of these Doctrines in every respect from this Argument.

57. Nothing could have happen'd more unfortunate than these two Citations, or more

more contrary to the end of citing them. When one is charg'd with varying his Sentiments in relation to the Measures of Civil Obedience, 'tis hard if he should have no other way to free himself from this Charge, but by referring his Auditory, and afterwards the whole Kingdom, to two Passages which both of them prove it directly upon him.

58. For 'tis as clear as the Light from them, that in case the Phrenzy of the Prince break out in an Attempt upon the Liberties of the Nation, he does not thereby *destroy the Relation* between himself and the People, or forfeit his Title to the Crown; but is only to be put under a Course of Physick and restrain'd from doing Violence to himself or others till he recover. 'Tis as clear, I think, on the other hand, that the same Opinion has not been always maintain'd; that it is not so at present, that it was not so at the Revolution, nor for some time after.

59. The Abdication will do us no service in that Case according to his Sermon. For King James's Abdicating did not consist in his leaving the Kingdom, without any Orders for the Government of it in his Absence, but only in his persisting in his illegal Pretences to be above the Law; that is, there were no Signs when he withdrew himself that his *Phrenzy* was abated; he still continu'd *non Compos*. What was to be done in this Case? why, we are told the Power was to be administer'd by others for the *Prince's and the People's safety*. The least then one would think they could have done, since he had elop'd out of the hands of his Physicians, would have been to have sent them after him; and when by proper Applications he was come to himself, the Kingdom, as had been done in a like Case to *Nebuchadnezzar*, might have been restor'd to him.

60. We are reminded, p. 15. of the frequent Promises Her Majesty has made of maintaining the Toleration, and the earnest manner wherein Moderation has been recommended from the Throne. I have nothing to say to the Toleration in the Sense wherein 'tis design'd, neither does it become me to examine the Grounds upon which the Government granted it; but if *Occasional Conformity* happen to sculk under the general Notion of a Toleration I cannot but profess my Dissent from this.

61. The Name of Moderation is attended with a grateful and lovely Idea! 'tis a Vertue and a Christian Vertue; yet the Method taken to prove it a Vertue, with respect to the Dissenters, will not do; especially if by the Dissenters, be meant *Occasional Conformists*. The force of the Argument lies in this, that we ought to do as we would be done by. This Rule of our Saviour is confirm'd by the Responses of inward Truth, when we put the Question to our own Hearts; 'tis a very true and safe Rule in all Cases of an indifferent Nature, wherein we are Arbitrary and under no antecedent Obligation: but without this Limitation a Man may argue from it, for a Toleration to Papists, as well as other Dissenters, and may condemn us for want of Moderation to them, because there are some Laws against them, which supposing our selves Papists, we should wish to be repeal'd; *Is this to do as we would be dealt by, if we differ'd from what was establish'd?* Why might not the Question be put in one case as well as the other?

62. Loose and indeterminate Applications of general Rules, instead of directing the Consciences of Men, are many times apt to confound and mislead them. Before therefore any one express an Amazement, to hear of some Complaints in relation to the Dissenters, he should have shewn, that the Principles and Practices of the Dissenters are justifiable, and such as give us no Reason to complain. Every body would then agree that our Complaints shew want of Moderation, and that the Application of our Saviour's Rule had been proper and pertinent.

63. But who are they that thus complain? We have a favourable Character of them in the next Paragraph, we are told, "That there are those who study to raise and keep up Complaints, and who have infus'd a Jealousy of Designs against the Establish'd Church. That those who have ventur'd the most, and wrote the best for it, bear

“ bear no small share of the Load ; as if they instead of defending the Church were
 “ betraying it. *That* this is so wicked and groundless a Jealousy, a wise Man will not
 “ attempt to cure those who are possess’d with it: and *that* those whose infuse it most,
 “ cannot but know it to be the Contrivance of false and black Malice.

I shall add a word or two to these several Particulars : ‘Tis needless to examine, whether those who have the Interests of Church and State most at heart, be the Persons struck at in them.

64. That there have been Complaints among us of ill Designs against the Church, is too evident to be deny’d or dissembl’d ; but ‘tis one thing to raise and keep up Complaints, and another thing to have just Grounds and Reason to complain : If those that complain do not do it without Cause, then the imputation of infusing Jealousies will lie where some Persons would not have it. But where the true grounds of our Complaints are to be charg’d will be consider’d by and by. We are told in general, (’twould not have been convenient to have descended to particulars) of *those* who have ventur’d the most, and wrote the best for the Church. Comparisons are not always the most courtly. But whether, *Sir*, was it a greater Venture at a Time of the greatest Danger, for one Doctor to take a trip out of the Kingdom, or for another to stay at home, and expose himself in a faithful discharge of his Ministry, to all the Dangers and Inconveniencies that could threaten him in this World. There are *Perils*, I confess, by Water as well as by Land : But we live in so happy a Climate, that few among us export themselves, but either in order to Travel or Traffick, except it be now and then an Envoy, or an Embassador, or perhaps an Express. Whether *Dr. B—t* went over with any of these Characters, I shall not presume to say ; but in the way of Traffick ‘tis usual to consider not only what Hazard a Man runs, but upon what *Views* and Expectations he ventures.

65. But who are they, *Sir*, that have wrote the best for the Church ? ‘tis a pertinent Question to you, who do not content your self with the knowledge of Title Pages and Editions, but spend so great a part of your Time in looking into our best Modern Authors, and making your self familiar with them. How far you are responsible to your Fraternity, for exceeding the Bounds of their Mystery, I must leave it to them to judge.

You will tell me perhaps the learned Prelate, who has given us an Exposition of the 39 Articles of our Church, has in that and several other Books he has publish’d, done good Service to the Church, to the Reformation, and to Religion in general. But I only mention the *Exposition*, not with a design to detract from a Performance, which is on many Accounts valuable, and recommended, as we are told, by two very great Authorities : But to shew that there are some Notions in it, for which the Church is not much indebted to the Author, I shall mention but two ; The first is, his owning and labouring to prove the Validity of Ordination by mere Presbyters ; and if his Reasons conclude any thing, even by Lay Hands in case of Necessity : A Concession directly contrary to the Doctrine and Rules of the Catholick Church in all Ages, and plainly condemn’d by our own ; if the Preface to the Form of Consecration, &c. which has also the Ratification of the State, speak the Sense of our Church. The other point, which I shall have occasion to examine more particularly before I have done, is his owning the Validity of Lay-Baptism.

Now to confine my self to these Particulars ; it seems a very odd way of Writing for the Church, to espouse Doctrines she condemns ; and particularly with respect to one of them, to call her Condemnation of it in effect a Conceit, and a *wild* Conceit. Is this the way to prevent, or to keep up and encourage scandalous Schisms against her ?

There is another learned Father of our Church, who by his Writings has done great Service to it, and at a time of Danger too. He reap’d a Harvest of Triumphs o’er a celebrated Bishop of the *Romish* Communion : He has continued his Services to the Church, by rendring some very valuable and venerable Pieces of Antiquity of more common

common Use. What amazes all Men is, that a Person so well acquainted with the Apostolical Fathers, should have made his court to the Secular Powers in such a manner, and gone into such other measures, as seem no ways reconcileable to the Principles and Practice of the Apostolical Age. But as to the Conduct of the other learned Prelate no body wonders at it.

Yet 'tis not my design, *Sir*, to draw Parallels, I am altogether unqualified for such a Task: there are no doubt a great number of learned and good Men, on both Sides of some Questions that are agitated with much Heat among us: But all that can be concluded from hence is, that Learning does not secure Men from being willing, nor Piety from being liable to be deceiv'd.

66. But these jealousies are incurable! and a Father of the Church will not lend his healing Hand towards the Cure of them. More the Pity. Yet though he will not attempt the Cure, there seems to be no great difficulty in prescribing a Method that may effect it: What if no farther occasion should be given to those who entertain such Jealousies? What if the Gentlemen of the Low-way should not be so liberal of their good Graces to the Dissenters, nor unite with them in Elections to oppose Men of true Church Principles? What if they should forbear all under-hand Correspondence or private Intercourse with them, all suspicious and familiar *advances* towards them; and on the other hand, go readily into all such Designs as are really for the Honour and Interest of the Church?

67. Were these Rules observ'd we should find very few who profess themselves Sons of the Church of *England* so wicked, as industriously to infuse Jealousies of this kind out of a false and black Malice; to speak in the Language of Moderation.

68. We come now in the close of this Sermon to a solemn Appeal to God-Almighty, that he never heard, or knew of any Designs against the Church, by that sort of Men who lie under such Suspicions, but much, much to the contrary.

69. 'Tis a tender Point this I am going to speak to, and though we ought not to question the sincerity of a Father of the Church, declaring himself with such Circumstances of Solemnity, concerning a Matter of Fact which no body is better able to judge of; yet this may not be satisfactory to all People, some may think it might not have been improper, before the making and publishing this Declaration, to have consider'd two or three such Questions as these that follow.

70. Whether admitting Schismatics to Communion, without a solemn and open Renunciation of their Schism, be not contrary to the Rules and Practice of the Catholick Church in all Ages, and the present Canons of our own?

Whether therefore Occasional Conformity be not a scandalous practice, and prejudicial to the Rights and Authority of the Church; and whether those that plead for it or do not oppose it, can be reckon'd the truest Friends of the Church?

Whether in case Schismatics might be admitted to Communion, without renouncing or abjuring their Schism? an Exception ought not however to be made to such Schismatics as were never lawfully baptiz'd, or according to the Doctrine of our Church, as I shall shew afterwards, never baptiz'd at all.

Whether it be not a greater Hardship upon the Clergy, to be oblig'd under certain Penalties, and contrary, as they suppose, to the Nature of their Duty to administer the Sacrament to known Schismatics, than it would have been to the Dissenters not to have been capable of Places or Offices in the Government?

Whether the Clergy have not Consciences as well as the Dissenters, and if they have, whether as great Tenderness ought not to be us'd towards them?

Whether the Episcopal Clergy in *Scotland* might not expect the same Benefit of a Toleration with the Non-Conformists in *England*? and if some of those sort of Men have not been well known, who have oppos'd all designs of this nature, or at least have not been very forward to second and promote them? To come to more private matters.

Whether threatening the Clergy in case they voted in Elections for Persons of known Zeal and Affection to the Church, with Disgrace and loss of Favour, was not a prejudice to the Church and a discouragement to Churchmen to shew themselves for it?

Whether slighting and browbeating worthy and learned Men of true Church Principles, and for no other Reason; and openly caressing empty worthless *Creatures* for no visible Merit, but because they came over to the Church with Phanatick and Republican Principles, be not a Contempt, and design'd so, to the Orthodox and Regular Clergy?

These are some few of the Questions which 'tis thought might have been a little consider'd before an Appeal were made in so very awful and solemn a manner.

71. I have done, *Sir*, with what I had to observe to you from the former of these Sermons, that on the Fifth of *November*. If I have been diffuse in my Remarks, I shall make you amends, by confining my self, for I do not write in a disposition to find Fault, to two Particulars in the following Sermon, on the *Thanksgiving Day*.

The first of them relates to a Notion, a Conceit, a *wild Conceit*, as it is there termed, among us, that none but the Clergy can validly baptize. The second to the supposed Author of this Conceit.

72. As to the *Conceit* it self, the Occasion taken to mention it is very surprizing, p. 22. We had just before had a Catalogue of the dangerous Errors and Corruptions in the Church of *Rome*, and at the Foot of it are these Words, *I wish none of their Leaven may be fermenting among us*. This gave occasion to consider a corrupt Notion that begins to be spread among us, and which goes farther, we are told, even than their *Uncharitableness*. But how is this proved to be a corrupt Notion? Why, it has been condemn'd by the Practice of the Church of *Rome*, and the Decrees of the Popes for some Ages. 'Tis true, some other Proofs are offered at, but this stands in the Front, and he seems to have the main stress of the Cause laid on it. *In Popery the Midwives baptize*. Ergo, to say that none but Persons regularly Ordain'd can validly baptize, is a Conceit and a wild Conceit, which could never have enter'd into the Head of any Man but Mr. D—ll, the great Corrupter of our Faith and Church. This is an excellent Method to clear the Nation of Popery. First to condemn the Corruptions of the *Romish* Church, and then almost in the same Breath, to recommend one of the most ridiculous, and absurd, and corrupt Practices of it. We shall not have a Papist left in the Kingdom e'er long. 'Tis much the Council of *Florence* was not rather quoted, wherein it was determin'd by his Holiness, not only that Christian Laymen, but a Woman, a Heretick, a Pagan, might validly baptize, —much more a grave and judicious *Midwife*.

73. But to be serious as the Nature of so great and important a Truth requires, *viz.* That none but the Clergy can validly baptize. I shall in opposition to the other Reasons here offer'd for the contrary Opinion, endeavour to make good the following Particulars.

1st. That this is the Doctrine of our Church. 2^{dly}. Of the Catholick Church. And 3^{dly}. that 'tis founded on the Commission our Saviour gave to his Apostles, in those words, *Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them, &c.*

74. 1st. This is the Doctrine of the Church of *England*; she gives no Permission for Laicks to baptize in any Case; if she do, let any such Permission be shewn, and this Point will be gain'd; but if she do not, then I am afraid, according to this Sermon, there will be a very great and notorious defect in her Constitution; as that she has not expressed a sufficient Care and Tenderneſs for poor dying Infants, where a lawful Minister cannot be had; and she has debar'd the Laity of a Right, a divine Right the B— of S— and T—I would found on *Mat. 28. 19.* which the People have to baptize. The former indeed would limit this Right to Cases of Necessity; but

T—I

7—7 is for extending it farther; upon the whole matter, there is no such great difference between them, but what may be easily adjusted among Friends.

As to what may be objected, that the Church has not express'd a sufficient Care and Tenderness for dying Infants, where a lawful Minister cannot be had; 'tis answer'd, that Compassion it self is to be shewn in the way, and according to the Means God has prescrib'd; but to be sure not in a way directly contrary to the Means he has prescrib'd, and to divine, positive Institution.

75. Indeed since the positive Institutions of God are not Means that work by any natural Efficiency, but purely as they are his Institutions, and are accompany'd for that reason with his Benediction; to pretend to apply such Means contrary to his Institutions is to apply *nothing*: Nothing that his Grace or Benediction can be expected upon.

76. 'Tis therefore no want of due Provision or Compassion in the Church towards dying Infants, that she has not provided for their Baptism in such cases, wherein a lawful Minister cannot be had; and wherein an unlawful Minister cannot baptize.

77. And indeed that the Church has made no such Provision is a very good Argument that she did not think it either lawful or necessary. There is great reason to believe she would have made it if it had been practicable; especially when she was considering how far her standing Rules and Orders might be dispens'd with in favour of tender and Weak Infants. And yet, Sir, in cases of great Weakness or Danger where 'tis allow'd by an express Dispensation, that such Infants may be baptiz'd at * Home, there is no Provision made, nor the least intimation given, that Baptism may be administer'd by any other Person than a lawful Minister; which in honour to the Church we ought to believe would have been done, had she look'd upon Baptism by Laicks to be in any case valid.

78. But that the Church does not allow the validity of such Baptisms, appears farther from the Questions in the Office for private Baptism; which plainly suppose, that if the Child were not baptiz'd by a lawful Minister, as well as in a lawful manner, he ought to be baptiz'd again.

79. All Persons have not the Common-Prayer-Book about them, nor think themselves concern'd to know the Rules of our Church, and therefore I shall cite the Rubrick immediately following those Questions, and lay it before them.

If the Ministers shall find by the Answers of such as bring the Child; that all things were done as they ought to be (that is, as the Rules of the Church direct by a lawful Minister, and in a lawful manner) then shall not the Child be christned again. Which plainly implies, that if he were not so baptiz'd, he ought to be christned again. Would you have a more evident proof, that Lay-Baptism is not, in the Judgment of the Church, valid? And yet he calls this a Conceit, and a wild Conceit!

80. I own indeed for some time after the Reformation, for things are seldom brought to perfection all at once, Baptism by Lay-hands, in cases of Necessity, was tolerated by the Church. But as the Church afterwards corrected the Rubrick (for she does not assume the Character of Infallibility) and condemn'd this practice; certainly we are to judge of her Sense in this Matter from her Condemnation, and not from what was done before it.

81. Yet I know it may be said, that all the Powers Christ left unto his Church being eminently and inclusively in her, she may in very extraordinary Cases communicate any particular Power to certain of her Members. If this be true, which I do not take upon me here to determine, then the Church lies under no imputation for authorizing Lay-Baptism for a Season, out of regard to the Necessity of the Times; tho' afterwards she might see Reason to revoke her Commission.

But whether such a Commission may be valid or not, 'tis now certain in Fact, that

the Church has revoked it. For the proof of which I shall only offer this farther Consideration, that the Office of Confirmation supposes all Persons to be confirm'd to have been baptiz'd according as the Rubrick directs: So that Persons who are not so baptiz'd, are not, in the Judgment of the Church, to be confirm'd; which as I take it, is no small Argument that the Church looks upon the Baptism of such Persons as invalid: Not to add, what may be by consequence deduc'd from the following Remark, that at the end of this Office 'tis expressly provided, that *there shall be none admitted to the holy Communion until such time as he be confirm'd, or be ready and desirous to be confirm'd.*

82. From whence another Query or two arises, which may deserve to be seriously considered.

1. Whether any Dissenter who has got a Commission for a Place, and was never lawfully baptiz'd, can be admitted to the holy Communion, even tho' he should formally renounce his Schism, till he has qualify'd himself to receive it, by being first confirm'd?

2. Whether tho' he should express a desire to be confirm'd, the Bishop *can* confirm him without his being Re-baptized?

3. Whether any Clergyman that should refuse to administer the Sacrament to a Person so unqualify'd, ought to incur any Penalty for so doing?

4. Whether the Act of Toleration is not to be explain'd in such a manner (to say nothing farther of the Canons) as is consistent with the Rubrick, confirm'd by Act of Parliament? Once more,

5. Whether if any part of the Rubrick be repeal'd by that Act, it were not very expedient that the Clergy, *for avoiding all scruple and doubtfulness*, should be inform'd what part that is?

83. But to return to the Argument in hand. We are told that the Church at the Restoration did not entertain the least Motion of *this sort*. A Negative is not the most easy to be prov'd, but especially where a positive Proof lies against it: 'Tis sufficient to shew what the Sense of the Church was at the Restoration in this matter, to produce the Rubricks we have mention'd, and the Confirmation then given to them. But under favour there is another very material Circumstance, which discovers what was the Judgment of the Church in this Point at the Restoration; and that is, a *new Office* was then provided for the Administration of Baptism to those of Riper Years: Which 'tis highly probable was prepar'd not so much for the sake of Proselytes from among the Jews, Mahometans, or other Infidels, which are so rare in these Parts of the Christian World; but for the sake of those great Numbers, who in the preceding times of Confusion, and *every evil Work*, had been baptiz'd by Lay-Hands, or came over to the Church, from such Sectaries as did not allow of Baptism.

84. I am next to consider what the Doctrine of the Catholick Church is in this Point. Not that I will pretend to give you an Historical Account of it through all Ages of the Church. But having prov'd that it is the Doctrine of the Church of England, that none but the Clergy can validly baptize; if I can shew farther, that this was the Doctrine of the Church for the First and earliest Times of it, then I think I shall have made a fair step towards proving it the Doctrine of the Catholick Church.

But I am glad to find any Disquisition of this Nature, as to the Apostolical Age and for some time after, render'd unnecessary to me; the Date of the *new Doctrine* being carried no higher than to somewhat above fourteen hundred Years. I shall therefore only observe, that the Validity of Lay-Baptism was not in any case allowed in the *Cyprianick Age*. There is no Dispute as to the Judgment of the *Eastern Church* in this matter at that time; 'tis undeniably evident from the Councils of *Carthage*, *Iconium*, and others in those days of less note. 'Tis true, their Decisions met with opposition in the *West*: but this is no Argument that they did not proceed upon Catholick Principles. *Stephen Bishop of Rome*, who oppos'd the Doctrine of the Bishop

of *Carthage* and the *Eastern Church*, was no more infallible than his Successors. So the Question will lie here, Whether *St. Cyprian* and his Collegues, supported the Doctrine of the *East* with better Arguments and Authorities than their Adversaries. If they did, as will appear to any Person that impartially examines them, then that Father was still the *Catholick Bishop*, and this which I am asserting, the *Catholick Doctrine*.

Yet 'tis probable that this new Doctrine, if we speak of the general acceptance of it, is even of a later origin than is here supposed. In the Year 325 the Council of *Nice* ordain'd (*Can. 19.*) that the *Paulianists*, who were reconcil'd to the Church, should be Re-baptiz'd: the Council of *Laodicea* determin'd the same about 35 Years after, concerning the *Montanists*. These indeed were Hereticks, but his L—, I presume, will not say that their Heresy made any alteration in the Case, or that none of the Dissenters among us are tainted with Heresy.

85. So that here seems to be a mistake in the Calculation, when we are told that the *Concett* concerning the Validity of Lay-Baptism, has been the constant Sense of the Church for above fourteen hundred Years. These two Councils cut off at least some part of the time from the Top, and our own Church almost a whole Century from the foot of his Account. I thought we had been to have taken the Standard of our Doctrine from the Primitive and Purest Ages of the Church, and the three first Centuries. In other cases we appeal to Primitive Christianity; why must we depart from it in this? So long as we can shew, that Lay-Baptism has been condemn'd as unlawful and invalid by the Church in its greatest Purity and Simplicity, and by our own at present; tho' we cannot deduce the same Doctrine in a Historical manner through all the Ages of the Church, or the later times of Popery, wherein *Midwives* have been allow'd to baptize, yet we have sufficient grounds to call and believe it a *Catholick Doctrine*; especially if we consider in the

86. 3d place, that 'tis founded on the Commission our Lord gave his Apostles, *Mat. 28. 19. Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them, &c.*

Either this Commission was given to the Apostles as Pastors of the Church, or as Christians at large. If it were only a general Commission, and all Christians may baptize by vertue of it, we must quit one of the clearest, and most full, and universally acknowledg'd Proofs of that distinct and successive Order of Men, Christ has appointed to minister in things pertaining to God; which the Author of the *Rights* will no doubt be very well pleas'd to hear of, tho' the World still hopes better things of a Father of our Church.

And yet some words are let fall in this Sermon, which import, as if this Commission was given in common to all Christians; for so we are taught, that it is a just part of the Order of our Church, that none but Persons initiated into holy Functions, should baptize and preach. So that if I have any clear Idea of the meaning of these words, the special Authority which we of the Ministry have to baptize, is a mere *Ritual Matter*, appropriated upon Reasons of Prudence and Decency to our Order, tho' at first the Commission was given by our Saviour to all Christians in general.

87. But how is this made out? Why, Teaching is join'd with Baptizing in the Commission; and if every Christian has a Right in case of Necessity to teach and instruct another, why not also to baptize? If this Reasoning be good, I cannot see, in case the Minister of a Parish be disabled from serving his own Cure, by Sicknes, or any other unforeseen Accident, and a regular Minister cannot be had to officiate for him, why it may not be lawful for the Clerk of the Parish, or any graver Person in the Congregation, to read the Prayers, and afterwards, for the Edification of the People, to step into the Pulpit? Is it not necessary in general that the Sabbath should be devoted to the Honour and Glory of God; and to this End, that his Worship should be publicly solemniz'd, and Men instructed in the Duties they owe to him? This seems very naturally to follow from the Argument thus formed in favour of Lay-Baptism, from these Words of our Saviour. D 2 But

But because it is not so directly said, That these Words of our Saviour were spoken in common to all Christians, but only, as I have observ'd, by just consequence, I shall not at present enter into the Detail of this matter, or suppose there was any Design to put us upon proving, that the Clerk hath not as good a Right to the Priesthood as the Parson.

88. I shall therefore, in answer to what is here advanced to prove the Lawfulness of Lay-Baptism, in cases of Necessity, only observe to you these two things:

1. That in every Commission there are for the most part some Instructions in common, as well as peculiar to the Party, to whom it is given.

2. That those Instructions which are appropriate and peculiar to him, do formally constitute his Commission, and cannot be executed by another, but by order of the same Authority that gave it.

89. 1st. In every Commission there are usually some Instructions in common, as well as peculiar to the Party to whom it is given: When an Ambassador is order'd to the *Hague*, to treat with their High and Mightinesses, on any Affair of Importance, this does not hinder but any of her Majesty's Subjects may repair thither on a lawful Occasion. The Liberty of going to the *Hague* is a common Privilege; but this is far from proving, that every *Englishman* that goes thither may present a Memorial (whatever Exigency happens) in her Majesty's Name to the States. 'Tis a way of Arguing altogether as inconclusive, that Teaching, admitting it imported no more than a common Duty, being join'd in the same Commission with Baptizing, 'tis therefore lawful for every Man to baptize, as well as teach in case of Necessity: But why in case of Necessity? If this Commission were given by our Saviour to all Christians indifferently, why should it be appropriated, except in such cases? If the People have a divine Right to baptize, why should it be taken away by human Constitution?

But to illustrate this Point a little farther, The Commission which the Bishop gives a Priest when he ordains him, is in these words, *Take thou Authority to preach the Word of God, and to administer the holy Sacraments*. Now the Office of Preaching being in common to Deacons, and as is said originally to the People, and which they have still a right to discharge in cases of Necessity; it follows from hence, that all sorts of People, Men and Women, as well as Deacons, may, not only upon occasion, lawfully hold forth, but even administer the holy Communion: For preaching and administering the holy Sacraments being here join'd in Commission, all Persons, (if there be any consequence in this Argument) that may preach, may also in extraordinary Cases, consecrate the Elements of Bread and Wine in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper: Will it be said, that in this respect too, Necessity is above all Rules?

90. Besides, it ought to be farther consider'd, that tho' Teaching in general be a common Office, yet in the Sense wherein our Saviour commands his Apostles to go and Teach, *teaching* imports a superior and more powerful way of Instruction. To Teach out of a Motive of Humanity or Charity, and to Teach as *one having Authority*, are two different Considerations. Had this distinction been consider'd, the very Foundation of this reasoning, which yet concludes nothing were it better founded, would have been destroy'd; for according to this, which I do not doubt, is the true Notion of the Word. There was nothing common in the Apostles Commission, except what related to their going into all Nations to discharge it, So that the only thing that can be concluded in favour of the Dissenters from this Passage is, that 'tis lawful for them to go about their honest Occasions, and even to Travel into the most distant parts of the Earth: A conclusion which no body ought to deny them the Benefit of. But

91. 2^{dly}. Those Instructions which are appropriate and peculiar to any Person, formally constitute his Commission, and cannot be executed by another but by order of the same Authority that gave it. This Rule seems too evident to need any Proof, 'tis I conceive universally true, with respect to all deriv'd Powers in Civil Government; but the Reason why it should be so, with respect to divine Institutions, is still stronger, not only as the Violation of the Commands of God is a Contempt infinitely greater than can be offer'd to the greatest Powers upon Earth, but as his Institutions

stitutions have no Efficacy in them any farther than his Blessing goes along with them.

92. Were it otherways, or that Necessity as is pretended were above all Rules; why in case Water could not be procur'd, might not Wine or Milk be made use of in Baptism? Or why might not a Man that is Dumb, or incapable of pronouncing the Words of Administration, or even of understanding them, baptize in a case of Necessity? What reason can any Man give, that the Authority of the Administrator is not as Essential to Baptism as the Matter or Form? And if the Administrator's Authority be equally Essential, I hope 'tis sufficiently clear from what has been said, that none but the Clergy can administer it; and consequently when 'tis administered by Lay-Hands, 'tis not only a scandalous Profanation of the Institution of God, but a downright solemn Nullity.

93. For there is no such thing, Sir, as a partial Essence which may be substracted from the thing 'tis essential to, without destroying it wholly.

The Essence of Matter consists in Extension, or in its having three Dimensions; take away one of these Dimensions, and pray what becomes of the other two; or what Idea will you form of Matter? 'Tis gone, 'tis annihilated! A Body, to speak in the barbarous Language of the Schools, that has not Longitude, has neither Latitude nor Profundity. Thus again,

To borrow another Instance from the former of these Sermons. "The Essence of our Constitution lies in this, that the Legislature is in the King, with the two Houses of Parliament. Here are three Powers essential to our Constitution, take away one of them and the Constitution is destroy'd; 'tis a Nonentity, a mere Phantom.

So with respect to the Administration of Baptism, there are these three things essentially requir'd; the Administrator, the Matter, and the Form. The Administrator can do nothing without the Matter, nor the Matter without the Form, nor both of them without the Administrator. The Administrator whom God has authoriz'd and commission'd to administer, without the concurrence of all these three Essential parts of the Institution, Baptism is only a more solemn piece of Pageantry, 'tis Asperision, 'tis throwing Water in the Child's Face, 'tis no Baptism.

94. One word more towards the discharge of my Promise in relation to the great Man, without any other distinction, who is here so candidly stiled the Corrupter of our Faith and Manners, and I have done. You have had the Opportunity of seeing and knowing the Value of every thing Mr. D—ll has publish'd, and are much better able to judge of his Character. I have seen him indeed, but perhaps so much learning was never seen in so great Simplicity. But what are all outward Ostentations to a Person who is wholly taken up with researches into ancient Monuments? He has perhaps had a Vision or two in the Course of his Studies: 'Tis a wonder, considering he has been all along so early and late up at them, that he has had no more: those that allow themselves little Sleep are apt sometimes to Slumber. Let us pardon the few Escapes of this learned Man for the sake of his many Excellencies; they only are able to judge, what diligence it will cost to arrive at his great Learning, who have arriv'd at it themselves.

95. Thus, Sir, I have gone through my Remarks on these two Discourses. If I have in any thing exceeded the bounds of Respect, which I set my self in relation to the Author's Character, I beg every body's Pardon into whose hands these Papers may come, and in particular your own: For I know your true Church Principles will not easily pass over an Offence of that kind.

I hope my poor endeavours to assert some important Truths, tho' in opposition to a great Name, will not be imputed to any Motive of Vanity, but a real Concern, which I bless God I have for the Truth, and a desire to shew my self grateful to those who have laid any extraordinary Engagements upon me. This has been the Motive on all the Occasions of my appearing in Publick, and 'twill justify my addressing you in so publick a manner.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

POST.

P O S T S C R I P T.

TO prevent any popular Odium that may be cast upon the Church, for condemning Lay-Baptism as invalid, it may not be improper to inquire a little farther, how far the Charity of the Church may in this case extend.

'Tis objected to us, that by asserting the Invalidity of Baptism, unless it be administered by a lawful, that is, as we explain it, an *Episcopal* Minister, we exclude a great part of the Reformed Churches abroad (I speak the common Dialect) and many of the Dissenters among us, from the great Privileges of the Christian Dispensation, and look upon them as not much better than Heathens and Infidels.

But this is putting the Objection a little too far: The visible Profession which those it turns upon, make of the Christian Religion, their believing in Jesus Christ, and the Evidence many of them give, of their Repentance from Dead Works, do, we hope, put them in the same Circumstances with the Primitive Christians, who defer'd their Baptism till towards the last and concluding Period of their Lives; out of a mistaken Notion, that any mortal (I do not speak it in opposition to *Venial*) Sin after Baptism, depriv'd them of all the Benefits of it: Yet the Church did not look upon such Persons as in a State of Infidelity, or incapable of the Mercies of God, through Christ Jesus, in the Gospel; they instructed them in the Principles and Doctrines of Christianity; they injoin'd them Penance; they admitted them to many Acts of Communion. Those who now profess Christianity, and were never lawfully baptiz'd, may be consider'd in the same Order and Disposition; especially such of them as are under an invincible Prejudice, or have not the Means of a lawful Ministry afforded them.

We are far from limiting the Mercy of God to those who err in the Simplicity of their Hearts, and do not offend of malicious Wickedness. God may make gracious Allowances for the want of his own Institutions, where they cannot be dispensed in the manner he has appointed; in such cases he will have Mercy and not Sacrifice; tho' by this Sermon it seems as if he will have Sacrifice and not Mercy. Why else is such Zeal shewn for the Lawfulness of Lay-Baptism, against *all Rules*, Divine and Human, in case of Necessity; especially when the * absolute Necessity of Baptism, in order to Salvation, is not asserted: The very Error upon which Lay-Baptism was first introduc'd, and is still continued.

Now admitting it were true, that Necessity is above all Rules in some cases, yet this Maxim ought not to hold in such a case, where there is no Necessity for the thing it self, in order to which the Rule is dispens'd with. Yet it is owned Baptism is not necessary to Salvation. There is then no Necessity that all Rules should be dispensed with, to put Persons by Baptism, into a salvable State.

This therefore is what we say, that as to Persons who *believe*, and yet were never truly baptiz'd, we must leave them to the Mercy of God, who best knows the Defects of their Capacities, the Strength of their Prejudices, and all the unhappy Circumstances of their Education, and no doubt will make merciful Remittances to them on all these Accounts.

But when we speak to those who profess themselves the Disciples of Christ, and live and converse among us; we ought not, we dare not, without being guilty of their *Blood*, to use the Apostle's Expression, but exhort them to be Baptiz'd, with all their Household, according to Christ's own Institution.

And this Method of proceeding is certainly more charitable, and a much greater Argument of true Tenderness and Compassion towards the Dissenters, than to incourage them in any dangerous or damnable Errors, by mean and unworthy Condescensions; how popular soever we have known them.

We do not damn all Persons that entertain any Errors, which may be in their Consequences damnable: we do not invade the Rights and Prerogative of the divine Mercy. I have shewn, on the other hand, we hope better things even of many who were never lawfully Baptiz'd, and things which *accompany* Salvation. We hope, but 'tis certainly as far as Hope or Charity *can* go, that God may upon their Faith and Repentance grant them Remission of Sins, without Baptism.

But at the same time we think it our Duty to shew Men that they may be much in Danger, where their Condition is not altogether desperate: And the Dissenters among us have still greater Reason to be apprehensive of their Danger, as they have so many Opportunities and excellent Means of better Information, as they can have no Plea for the Necessity of dispensing, were it really a good Plea, with God's Institution. They may when they please, be baptiz'd by a lawful Ministry, they and their little Ones: And therefore it may well deserve the Consideration of all our Sectaries more particularly, as they hope to be *save'd* by the standing and ordinary means of Salvation, whether the Baptism they have receiv'd was really administer'd by Persons whom God had authoriz'd, and commission'd to administer it.

'Tis a strange thing! the Dissenters in others cases are full of Doubts and Uncertainties; they are perpetually starting Difficulties, and putting Questions concerning things of little or no Moment. And this they call tenderness of Conscience. Is it not then, I say, strange, that in a case which strikes at the very Root of their Christianity, which renders even their Baptism, to say the best of it, much to be suspected, they should discover no manner of uneasiness?

In cases of Conscience Reason and Prudence direct us to chuse the safer Side, and which has the greater appearance of Truth and Certainty. Now let it be granted, that 'tis doubtful whether the Dissenting Ministers in general, are not authoriz'd by God to baptize; as to all of them, I think, except the Presbyterians, this will not so much as admit of a doubt: Yet granting it should, 'tis certain, 'tis beyond doubt, 'tis confess'd on *all* Hands, that Baptism by the Hands of an Episcopal Ministry is valid.

And as to the Presbyterian Ministry, if the Practice of the Apostolical Age, and of all succeeding Ages for fourteen Centuries, and the Decisions of the Earliest and most Authentick Councils, be sufficient to raise a Doubt against it, then the Validity of Baptism by those who were Ordain'd by mere Presbyters, is also greatly, very greatly to be suspected.

Why do not the Dissenters, if they be really of such tender and scrupulous Consciences, discover their Doubts, where there is most Reason for them, and where an Error is of the most dangerous and fatal Consequence to them?

If what I have said may be of Use to persuade any Dissenter, who has not been baptiz'd by a lawful Minister, to examine the Grounds upon which he believes his Baptism valid, and to examine them with that Seriousness and Impartiality which an Affair that so nearly concerns the eternal Salvation of his Soul requires. This I dare be very confident in, he will find more reason to doubt of his being baptiz'd according to the Institution of Christ, than for any other Doubt whatever, upon which he separates from the Establish'd Church.

What has been said is sufficient, I hope, to justify the Doctrine of the Church concerning Lay-Baptism, from the Charge of Uncharitableness. But I shall add this one Consideration farther, That no Man or Society of Men, is answerable for the Consequences of an Opinion, how harsh or uncharitable soever they may appear, provided the Opinion it self be true and well grounded.

The Apostle declares, *That to them who are Contentious and obey not the Truth, God has threatened Indignation and Wrath.* If we preach Damnation, and the Judgment of an avenging God against such Persons, except they repent, do we therefore damn them? No, 'tis what our Duty, what Charity requires us to preach; if they will damn themselves, they must answer for it; our Design is to bring them to Repentance, and to prevent their Damnation.

The Reason will hold as to any damnable Error; if we pass no Judgment upon them but what the Scripture authorizes, we are not answerable, because great Numbers are carried away with them. To suppose an uncharitableness in such a Judgment is to bring the Charge of it against the Scriptures, not against us who are to judge by the Rules of them. If Men will obstinately persist in any damnable Error we cannot help it, they are the Instruments of their own Damnation; all we can do in the case, is to use our charitable Endeavours to bring them to the acknowledgement of the Truth, that they may be saved. And if we must be call'd Uncharitable for this, what shall we call Charity?

The Question therefore is not, what Persons, or what Number of Persons stand condemn'd by the Judgment of the Church, in the Point we have been considering, but whether this Judgment be well founded? Whether it be agreeable, as I hope we have shewn it is, to Scripture and Primitive Christianity?



F I N I S

